

**T**HE Fight for Ten Hours  
and a Minimum Wage.  
Factories Where Boys Work  
for Ten Cents a Day and Men  
Get From 50 Cents to a  
Dollar—A Look at the Cot-  
ton Mills—Wages of Me-  
chanics—The Debt Slaves of  
the Plantations and How  
They Are Paid—A Shrewd  
American Scheme to Get La-  
bor—How Money Talks—  
The Mexican Pauper—Beh-  
ind the Scenes in a Mexican  
Hut—How the Peons Dress,  
Etc.

The question of wages and labor was agitated during the administration of Madero, and his efforts to better labor conditions were one cause of his downfall. The present administration is trying to carry out some of the policies inaugurated by him and the indications are that the labor troubles are only at their beginning.

There are millions in Mexico who are working on the haciendas for less than 25 cents a day and there are thousands in the factories who are being paid less than one dollar. In some of the mills the minimum wage is as low as 10 cents, and it runs from that to 45 cents, whereas in others, for the same kind of work, the wages run from 50 cents to a dollar. There are something like 40,000 laborers employed in the large factories, and their

their wages 50 per cent. They were receiving \$1 a day, and he gave them \$1.50. The result was that he got only three dollars for the day's work, and he finally had to discharge the whole gang and bring in new men at the old rate of wages. He says the labor is not so efficient as ours, and that one American will lay more bricks than four Mexicans.

The laboring people on the haciendas or *finques* are far less numerous than those of the cities. The average wages there run from 45 cents and upward per day, but millions of the farm hands and their families are in a state of debt slavery, getting little more than their clothing and food. They are much like those who dare not leave their masters without paying their debts, and as a result their work

At last the Americans brought in several bushels of new Mexican dollars, and laid them in great piles on the table in the rude building which formed their plantation office. They then called in the peons and showed them the money, saying that they had brought it there to pay off their debts. They were also told that they had bushels of other dollars to pay them wages as well. They offered to pay the debts of the peons provided they would drop their present employers and work for them, and the wages they proposed were higher than the peons had ever had. The money worked won-

forcing machine is one of the questions agitated by the reformers of Mexico to day, and it is the hope of the most ardent that it may be accomplished. The system has been completely discarded, reaching and all sorts of methods have been employed to keep the peons in debt. Nearly every big estate has its store where the Indian laborers can run bills of credit, and the same has been true of the fortunes and the families of the peon is naturally thrifless. He like his child, and he will borrow all that he can. This is especially so at the time of weddings and funerals. A man will mortgage his future in order to have a big wedding outfit, and when death comes there is no money to pay for the funerals, it is now on over for-

ceived \$5. The master called in the foreman, whereupon the foreman swore the peon, saying:

"You owe me \$15. Now, yellow, can't you see you owe \$15? First there was the \$5 I asked me for; second, the \$5 I gave you and third, the \$5 which was charged to your account. Now three times fifteen. You owe \$45, and you must pay it before you go back to your master. This is probably an overdrawn statement, but fraud could be easily perpetrated upon a poor, ignorant, unscrupulous master."

Indeed, it is hard to describe the conditions of the Mexican masses. There are hardly about 16,000,000 men, women and children, and of these more than three-fourths are Indians, of as pure blood

This condition seems all the worse when we remember the advanced civilization the Aztecs at the time Cortez came. They had their own records and picture writing and they lived far better than we do now. Mexico City then had 12 stone houses and Montezuma had 60 rich cities and villages in his possession. He had a court and a bureaucracy that is today and he kept better order. He had a system of postal stations and his courier service was such that letters of letter carriers brought dispatch from Cortez at Vera Cruz over the mountains to the capital in a matter of a week, about 400 miles, in a little more than a week. Fresh fish from the Gulf of

of them have been slaves ever since I wish I could show you how they are used. The houses are made of mud-brick and in this year of our Lord 1900. On most of the haciendas on the plain they have huts of sun-dried brick, some of which are so low that a man could stand upright in them. The rooms are small and dark. The windows are made of the rudest description. The roofs are flat and the houses are, in fact, no more than brick boxes. They are like the homes of the fellahin or the banks of the Nile.

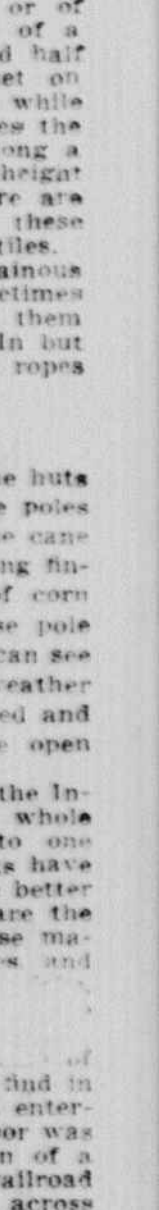
There are some about Toluca which are more than four feet high, and near the railroad on the way to Mexico City you may see families

especially as they have a way of loosening their trousers where the waist is the hardest. The sandals cost about cents a pair. They are merely loops of strips tied to the bare feet with a little string.

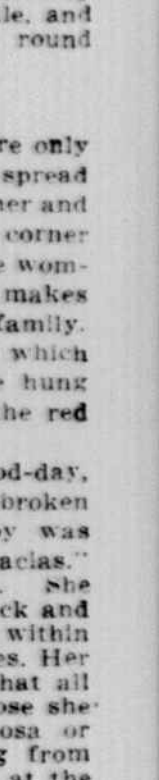
Down in the lowlands the women wear less clothing than on the plateau, and men carry a long, a foot or so wide, black lightweight with short sleeves and a cut low at the neck and tied in a string at the waist. As to the children, the less said about their clothes the better. A little back of Tampico another Vera Cruz you may find good-sized children wearing nothing but the fig-leaf. Adam and Eve may be Eve ate that apple. The babies, likewise, go naked.

FRANK G. CARPENT

of half-year is about 25 leather strings. In wear a common Huber. This with a children, one bet- and near and boys than did apple.



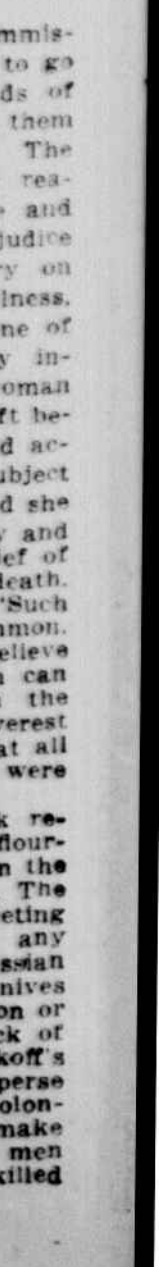
## A HOME. IN THE LOWLANDS.



PEONS  
OF A RUBBER  
PLANTATION  
IN  
CHIAPAS

MONEY TALKS. THE BUSHELS  
OF SILVER DOLLARS WHICH  
BOUGHT MEXICAN LABOR

**DISCOVERED by Kasimir Veliki, the Explorer—It Has More Stringent Laws Than Any Other Community in the World—Russian Government Does Not Know What to Do With the Inhabitants, Who Have Violated Almost Every Law of the Land—To Prevent Word of Their Existence Reaching the Outside World They Have Murdered Most of the Unfortunate Travelers Who Have Fallen Into Their Hands.**



**RELIGIOUS RITES IN THE NEWLY DISCOVERED RUSSIAN CONVICT REPUBLIC.**  
The settlement has just been visited by a government commission under military protection, and a strange code of laws, more strict than that of the ancient Hebrews, has been revealed.

and laws, and in the village and around it were about 500 Cossacks and about 500 men at the time it was discovered by the Veliki.

The Russian commission, carefully guarded by the 500 Cossacks, set itself to examine the laws and economic state of the republic. They had opportunities to see everything they wanted to know. When entered the village a man was being hung up by the heels for stealing a horse. And not far off a naked woman lay in the snow. Around his body danced the Imank women, and sang imprecations against her betrayer who had been seduced, had broken the local fishing law.

The Imank republic proved to have no code of laws, which means that there are no Russian or other original traces — only European ones.

The "starshins" of the republic told

**N. A. NAGLIKOFF,**  
Russian minister of the interior, who does not know what to do with the Finnish republic.

Manank people, she said, were not punished. "In cases," says the report, "are common. The Manank people one and all have been offended. They could not tolerate the Chinese. Their law provides the severe punishment of death for any Chinese who enters. In one year four women were put to death."

What will become of the Manank people was not yet settled. It is still in the air. The Cossacks withdrew when the commission returned to Vladivostok. The Manank people were not threatened and threatened to resist by force. They attempted to make them submit to Russian rule. They were not organized into a company. They are not organized into a plan. It is stated, is to displace the republicans and use them for organizing the Manank people. The Manank people are as they are first-rate at fishing and forest work and are skilled trappers and hunters.

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